(c) if so, what steps have been taken by his Ministry to ensure that the benefit reaches the common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANIA): (a) Government have from time to time reduced customs duty on certain drugs, drug intermediates and finished medicines in public interest.

(b) and (c) The prices of specfied drugs are fixed by the Administrative Ministry under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1987. While fixing the prices of drugs under this Order, the extent of reduction of customs duty is taken into account. In the case of drugs which are not under price control, drug manufacturers and their Associations are advised by the administrative Ministry to pass on the benefit to the extent of duty concession to the consumers.

Payment of Enhanced Rent for State Bank of India, Delhi Cantt. Branch Premises

2082. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:

SHRI DHARAM PAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rent of State Bank of India building at Delhi Cantonment was enhanced from Rs. 5,339/- to Rs. 25,000|- per month in 1984, with the condition that the same will be payable after the completion of another two strong rooms in the rented premises;

(b) whether it is also a fact that rent at enhanced rate of Rs. 25,000|- per month is being paid since 1984, although the construction of additional two strong rooms was completed only in 1987;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the matter was brought to the notice of the then Finance Minister in July, 1986; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative what action Government propose to take against erring officials in the State Bank of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) State Bank of India has reported that the rent of its Delhi Cantt. Branch was revised from Rs. 5339|- to Rs. 25000|- per month *w.e.f.* 1-1-84. The enhancement of rent was part of a package deal which envisaged, among other things, provision of two strong rooms, replacement of entire electric wiring, water proofing of certain roofs, renovation of outhouses, etc. However, as there was considerable delay in the completion of required construction and carrying out of additions|alterations in the premises, the payment of the enhanced rent to the landlords was stopped *w.e.f.* February, 1988. The landlords have since completed the major portion of the work under the contract and the bank is re-examining the position regardng the release of the agreed rent.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) State Bank of India was advised to investigate the matter. As a result of its investigation, certain discrepancies came to notice. The bank has already advised its concerned Local Head Office to take necessary action to remedy the discrepancies.

Direct Taxes Advisory Committee

2083. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA:

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the Direct Taxes Advisory Committees at the All India level and regional levels have not yet been constituted;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) when such committees are likely to be constituted and what are the reasons for the delay; and

(d) when the terms of the last Committees expired?